

Physical Needs of Language Resource Centre to Support English Language Learning

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A B S T R A C T

A learning resource centre must have facilities that can be used by students in seeking information and knowledge. The present study aimed to investigate the students' perception of the physical needs of resource centre to support English language learning. The study employed qualitative approach with a case study design. The participants of the research were 104 English Department students. Questionnaire and interview were used to collect the data. The results showed that there was a neutral indication on students' perception of the physical needs of the LRC. The language resource centre facilitated the students to find out some references for course assignments, to obtain additional information on certain subject, to enrich students' knowledge through book review program, and to build independent learning through digitalization. However, the availability of up-to-date materials collection, EFL website access, and sustainable language program should be developed and qualified. Therefore, a constructive solution is needed to optimize the functions of learning resource centre to support English language learning.

Keywords: perception, learning resource center, physical needs, English language learning

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INTRODUCTION

The quality of education, from basic to higher education, is determined by eight (8) norms established by the government. The Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards has formulated eight national standards of education, namely content standards, graduate competency standards, standards of educators and education personnel, management standards, assessment standards, infrastructure standards, educational process standards, and education cost standards (Kemendikbud, 2005). It is obvious that learning resources as an integral part of infrastructure standards become one of the factors that can improve the quality of education.

Indeed, the maximum of management and utilization of learning resource center (LRC) in every university and other educational institutions benefit students' learning process. The quality of education and learning is determined by the availability of language learning centers, while the low quality of education is due to the lack of learning resources for both teachers and learners (Rahmat et al., 2023). Those are the rationale of the existence of LRCs in higher education.

Basically, resource center is not just a place where one institution can find and store source materials for distribution to students and teachers. It is also a place for users to seek assistance, guidance and have discussion sessions. Hence, there are several characteristics of resource center that should be considered to reach outstanding LRC: (a) physical facilities,

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(b) variety of information both printed and unprinted materials, (c) efficient management, (d) trained media personal, (e) clear missions and objectives, and (f) center for teaching, learning and recreational activities (Sulaiman, 2011). Creating a helpful resource center helps students to develop language learning.

Learning Resource Centre in Higher Education to Support English Language Learning Library

A more contemporary definition of a library is a building where knowledge is collected, stored and made available mainly free of charge. Such knowledge can be in book, journal or other forms of paper format, may consist of photographs, maps and graphic representations, or may be based on digital and other forms of electronic media (Edwards, 2009); magazines, manuscripts, biographies, CDs, to serve students with information (Navghare et al., 2018). In essence, library connects students to information they need.

In the current circumstances, libraries should re-conceptualize its process to be integrated with technology (Navghare et al., 2018). In fact, ICT can assist libraries to improve the quality services, collection development, efficient library operations, sharing e-resources, and standardization. Moreover, the ICT impact on libraries can be seen from digitalization with various names such as electronic library, digital library, hybrid library, virtual library etc. (Kulkarni, 2019). It is in line with Edwards (2009) that one of three perspectives which will fashion the library of the future is the library as high-tech access to learning. Therefore, educational institutions need to ensure the mastery of resource center specialist of three LRC domain; IT, educational technology, and libraries Al Musawi & Amer (2017). In conclusion, digital form of library represents a profound shift in the way knowledge and information are accessed and disseminated.

Language Laboratory

The language lab is one of the resourceful tools available in language learning. It is a room with equipment, such as computers or tape recorders, where students can listen to and practice speaking foreign languages (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), and to test the other four skills (Lokmac et al., 2015). The language laboratory's principle allows learners to engage in both oral and written communication to learn to speak a foreign language effectively. Since its establishment, the language lab has significantly contributed to learning the English language away from traditional classrooms. In digital era, the facilities are more complete. Therefore, learners easily acquire the target language.

Moreover, language lab setting should be managed properly with technological tools and CALL materials in accordance to the goals of learning EFL (Dwinaya & Caromawati, 2022). Well-equipped language lab with new trends and technology make students feel comfortable, reducing fear, and raising motivation (Lokmac et al., 2015). It makes the process of learning a language easier and interesting (Krishna, 2021). In short, the existence of language lab is beneficial in language studies.

Seminar Room

Seminar room is discovered in a resource language as an added facility. This room is utilized to hold discussion, tutorials or lectures (Sulaiman, 2011). Seminar room is a very important requirement for English department. It has capacity of about more than a hundred students with complete facilities such as tables and chairs, hanging board, LCD projectors, sound speaker, air-conditioner, etc. It also benefits for national or international seminars, students' presentation activities, and teaching practice.

Research studies have shown the importance of LRC development. A research conducted by Shafie et al. (2012) at the University of Teknologi MARA, Johor Branch revealed the benefits of the library programs in the following dimensions: (a) SL staff members that helps users or students to find resource materials, (b) The facilities for comfortable studying environment in SL (c) Online computer facilities available to search

websites for accessing reference material, (d) SL where environment are conducive for users, and (e) Leadership and managerial in SL compared to rural with urban and boarding school.

Moreover, Shuhidan et al. (2020) focused on the type of activities held in School Resource Centers (SRC) that give impact on students' civilization and support them in developing life-long learning habits. The targets of the study were the students of secondary students in Malaysia aged between 13-17 years old. Therefore, it enables them to be knowledgeable and responsible citizens in a civilized society. A survey was distributed to secondary students, and the findings showed that there was a positive indication with a 4.21 mean value on students' civilization for the use of SRCs.

Dealing with language laboratory as a learning resource center, a research done by Asningtias (2018) aimed to unfold the chances and challenges of running the language lab at several secondary school level based on teacher's perspective. The study proved that Language Laboratory (LL) that had been utilized by language teachers enhanced their teaching by exposure of the target language. In short, it is crucial for students to get exposure to the authentic use of language by the native speakers of English from the language laboratory.

In spite of its importance for improving the quality of learning as mentioned above, the fact also prove that the learning resources do not benefit students' learning process. A literature research conducted by Rahmat et al. (2023) with a literature study method indicates the necessity of learning resource centers development in remote, disadvantaged, and leading areas, for instance during the covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, that the availability of LRCs in every school, university, and other educational institutions require the maximum management and utilization for the benefit of learning. Otherwise, the learning resources do not effect students' language achievement.

Indeed, it is 21st century demand that facilitate students to have high thinking by facilitating good learning resource centers to support their English language learning. Previous studies have highlighted the beneficial roles and challenges of LRC. However, the study on the exploration of the existence of LRC to support students' English language learning is limited. This research seeks to investigate the students' perception to find out an ideal LRC. Therefore, this study aims at answering the following questions:

- 1) What are the students' perceptions of the LRC to support English language learning?
- 2) Why do the students have the perception?

METHOD

The study was a qualitative approach with case study design. This research aimed to investigate the students' perception of the phenomenon of language resource centres to support the English language learning (Yin, 2003).

Respondents

The respondents were English Department students of UIN SUSKA Riau, consisting of 104 students from even semester. They consisted of 20 males and 84 female students. There were 27 of second semester, 50 students of fourth semester, 17 students of sixth semester, 8 students of eighth semester, and 2 students of > semesters that have participated in this research. The respondents were chosen based on their convenience and availability.

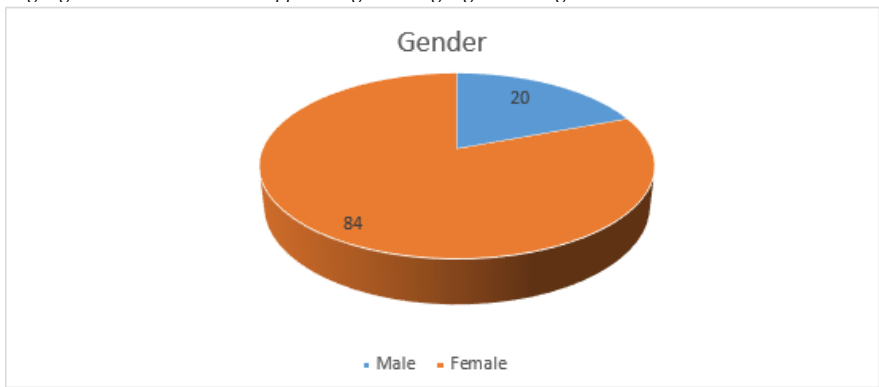


Chart 1. Students' Characteristic Based on Gender

The above chart summarizes students' characteristic. There are 20 (19.2%) males and 84 (80.8%) female students. In fact, female students are more than male students in the English Education Department. Female respondents are dominant in numbers.

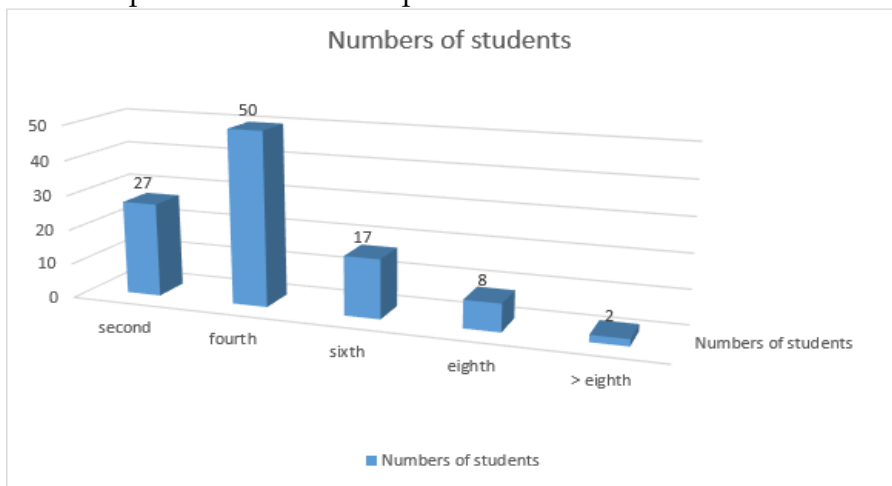


Chart 2. Students' Characteristic Based on Semester

The chart 2 shows the variation of semester of the students involved. There were 27 of students (26%) of the second semester; 50 (48.1%) of the fourth semester, 17 (16.3%) of the sixth semester, 8 (7.7%) of the eighth semester, and 2 (1.9%) of the > eighth semester.

Instruments

The survey questionnaire and interview were used to collect the data. The survey consisted of a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree in three dimensions: (a) space for facilities in the resource centre; (b) location and layout of the resource centre; and (c) furniture. The guided interview questions related to the three indicators of physical needs of LRC.

Procedures

Firstly, the researchers designed 34 questions to be tested for validity. The survey was designed from the theory of the physical needs of LRC by Sulaiman (2011). The questionnaire was distributed to 35 students (semester 2= 10, semester 4=7, semester 6= 7, semester 8=9, and semester >8= 2). The data was collected via Google Form and distributed through WhatsApp. The results showed that all questions were valid (rtable=0.3246). Then, the questionnaire survey was distributed to other participants.

Furthermore, the college student participants (n=104) had completed a survey questionnaire in order that the researchers identified the students' perceptions of their experiences and challenges in using LRC to support their English learning. Meanwhile, the interview was conducted to 9 students both in English and Indonesian depending on the preference of the participants. They were interviewed face to face. It spent twenty up to thirty minutes for each interview section.

Data analysis



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The Results of Questionnaire*

The tabulated scores of the students' responses (n=104) of the questionnaire survey are presented below:

Table 1. The Students' perception toward the physical needs of LRC

Number of Students	Percentage (%)	Category
1	0.96	Very positive
42	40.38	Positive
56	53.84	Neutral
4	3.84	Negative
1	0.96	Very negative

Table 1 shows students' perception survey (n=104) toward the three aspects of physical needs of language resource learning. It points out that majority of them show neutral. There are less than half participants in positive and very positive category (41.24%), whereas, 4.8% of them are in negative and very negative respond.

Table 2. The students' respond of space for facilities in the resource center

No	Statement	Total score	Average score	Average score of the category	Category
1	The library provides reference and information for students.	395	3.79		
2	The library is large for collection of reading materials.	366	3.51		
3	The library provide various printed materials such as books, journals, newspaper, and magazine to support the English language learning.	356	3.42		
4	The library provides up-to-date collection of materials for students.	343	3.29		
5	The students can obtain audio materials from the resource center for self-study.	341	3.27		
6	The materials can be borrowed by students at home.	400	3.84		
7	The learning resource center provides students with the opportunity to surf the Net and use the information technology facilities.	365	3.509	3.35	Neutral
8	The learning resource center provide enough computers for the number of students.	324	3.11		
9	The printing equipment is available to copy the materials.	314	3.01		
10	The electrical supply is available to operate the all equipment well.	346	3.32		
11	There is viewing room which provide television, compact disc, film projectors, slide projector that can be used for students' lesson.	309	2.97		
12	The equipment needed are set safely.	315	3.02		
13	A mobile or ceiling-fixed screen is placed in front of the room.	327	3.14		
14	A white board is in front of the room for the teacher's usage.	402	3.86		

15	A special room for cassette radios, audio tapes, films, various projectors, television set, slides, transparencies, charts, pictures, models, maps and figures as teaching aid materials are available.	324	3.11
16	There is operator room to restore, to catalogue, and to process books and the new materials received.	340	3.26
17	There is seminar room as a well-equipped place to hold discussions, tutorials or lectures.	384	3.69

Table 2 points out that approximately the students' perception of the space for facilities of the resource center is neutral, especially 11 of 17 statements. Their perception to the six statements is positive.

Table 3. The students' respond of location and layout

No	Statement	Total score	Average score	Average score of the category	Category
1	The location is easy to access.	376	3.61	3.46	Neutral
2	The space is comfortable to study.	356	3.42		
3	Resource center is equipped with fans, exhaust fans or air-conditioning to comforts students .	343	3.29		
4	The resource center have enough light either from the sun or lamps to reading the materials.	379	3.64		
5	The environment is tidy, neat, colorful, and interesting graphic to bring about a feeling of comfort among students.	355	3.41		
6	The resource center is free from noise inside and out.	338	3.25		
7	The resource center is safety for students.	376	3.61		
8	Catalogues is placed somewhere accessible to facilitate the finding of materials.	345	3.31		
9	Libraries offer computerized cataloguing to facilitate the finding of materials.	356	3.42		
10	The counter must be placed at the entrance to facilitate borrowing and returning of materials.	387	3.72		
11	Racks to place users' belongings are provided outside the library.	361	3.47		
12	Notice board is put up outside the resource center where information regarding the activities or regulation of the center are pinned.	375	3.60		
13	The resource center have a rest area where students can relax or do light reading.	366	3.51		
14	Exhibition of new books area is available to promote newly acquired books.	337	3.24		
15	To encourage the germination of	339	3.26		

	knowledge, an area for story-telling, book review and theme or event-based exhibition is provided.		
16	Story-telling or public speaking corner must also stimulate the participants.	379	3.64

Table 3 points out that approximately the students' perception of location and layout of the resource center is neutral, especially 9 of 16 statements. Their perception to the seven statements is positive.

Table 4. The students' respond of furniture

No	Statement	Total score	Average score	Average score of the category	Category
1	Tables, chairs, bookshelves (high and low), counter table with drawers, card catalogue cabinet, notice board, newspaper racks, standing file cabinet, magazine racks, audio carrels, chart and map racks are available.	365	3,51	Positive	Positive

Table 4 reveals the students' perception of the furniture in the resource center is positive. It shows that the availability of the furniture support students' language learning.
The Results of Interview

Furthermore, the researchers interviewed 9 students. The interview was conducted both in English and Indonesian depending on the preference of the participants. They were interviewed face to face. It spent twenty up to forty minutes for each interview section. The guided interview questions related to the three indicators of physical needs of LRC.

Space for Facilities in the Resource Center

Library, language lab and seminar room as the learning resource center were available. The students utilized the LRCs for learning process and attending seminar. Dealing with library, the students revealed it as a place for them to find references for language assignments. Yet, it seemed that they needed more than what were available there. The library should provide more materials collection for the students.

"We attend proposal seminar" [student 1]

"We attend Islamic center for national and international seminar" [student 5]

"Our library is very large. I go to library many times to find out references through library's Wi-Fi access." [student 6]

"Mr. X instructed us to the library for some references. I just can find some books" [student 4]

"The library is large, but I cannot find all recommended sources" [students 2]

"I find more books, but no journal, newspaper, magazine in English" [students 6,7]

Furthermore, the students were allowed to borrow the materials such books.

Computers to access online materials were also available to students use. The equipment was safe for students, but the number of computers in the language lab, materials printing, ceiling-fixed projector should be a great concern.

"The problem is when the number of students are over 30" [student 1]

"We may borrow the books and copy in other places" [student 3]

"We borrow the projector anytime we need. It is not ceiling-fixed projector" [student 4]

Location and Layout

In addition, the accessibility of LRC location was not a problem for the students. The LRCs also comforted them due to air-conditioner and Wi-Fi access. They were convenient to be there. The lighting was also good for reading.

"I can access the library easily" [student 8]

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“We have schedule for lab” [student 3]

“It is quite and cool. I can access Wi-Fi. I like to be there.” [student 9]

“The three centers are facilitated with air-conditioner” [students 2,4]

Besides, the LRC was safety, but the issue of cleanliness, neatness, and serenity paid the students’ attention.

“The first period class seems careless with the lab hygiene. The visitors do not put the books on the proper shelf” [student 3]

“The library is free from noise, except lab. The lab is not soundproof room” [student 7]

In addition to digital materials, the students used digital catalogue to borrow and return books. The library was also complete with the counters, racks, notice board, and rest area. When the visitors were crowded, then the rest area was full for users.

“We can use computer to search the references and catalogues” [student 3]

“Less space if it is crowded” [students 2,3]

Besides finding references, other activities such seminar and book review were conducted. Yet, exhibition of new books, area for story telling or public speaking corner were not found.

“1 attended book review at the library” No such story telling or public speaking corner there” [student 5]

Furniture

At last, the basic furniture was available. The students utilized the facilities provided in LRCs.

“There are tables, chairs, bookshelves, counter, digital catalogue, racks, etc” [students 5,6,8]

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The students’ perceptions of the LRCs to support English language learning

This study investigates the students’ perception of the physical needs of learning resource center to support English language learning at English Department of UIN Suska Riau. The findings indicated neutral perception in overall aspects of LRC. In general, the students’ perception of space for facilities, location and layout was neutral, while in furniture aspect, the students showed the agreement.

Based on the results of the first indicator; space for facilities in the resource centre, various printed materials such as books, journals, audio materials, compact disc, projectors and computers are classified as learning resource by design. Meanwhile, newspaper, magazine, television, and public space are categorized as learning resource by utilization. Learning resources designed are learning resources that are specifically developed to achieve learning objectives. In addition, learning resources by utilization are learning resources that are not specifically designed or developed for learning purposes, but can be selected and utilized for learning purposes (Rahmat et al., 2023). Some statements from the interview related to up-to-date, audio, and digital materials strengthened the students’ perception. In fact, language resource centre that provide up-to-date information support the functions of teaching and learning (*A Resource Centre Guide for Schools and Colleges*, 2004). Moreover, digitalization bring knowledge that is alive, interesting and relevant to meet users’ needs and demands, especially the millennials (Shuhidan et al., 2020). Briefly, those resources assist learners to meet the expectations for language learning.

Furthermore, the results of the second indicator, location and layout, show that area for storytelling, book review and theme or event-based exhibition, and public speaking corner can stimulate students. It is in line with Sulaiman (2011) that the existence of LRC in an institution has several functions; a centre of knowledge that provides collection of materials for users, a venue of discovery that promote innovation or products of extensive research and analysis, a centre for learning that facilitates areas for students to engage in

learning activities, a teaching centre in which teachers and students can conduct learning activities there, a centre of professionals such as research, and a public relation centre that link one institution to the public. Meanwhile, Loh (2019) mentions the five key roles of 21st century school library is to support reading, research, collaboration, studying and doing.

In short, a learning resource centre (LRC) is a centre for the collection and distribution of various information (Sulaiman, 2011); that provides services and facilities to support specific goals related to language learning, teaching, and research (Partners, 2003); (Al Musawi & Amer, 2017). In this case, language learning centre enables students to promote the learning of languages.

The Reasons of Students' Perception of LRCs Availability

Based on the results of questionnaire and interview, some reasons are highlighted. First, the existence and accessibility of LRC are important for students to support their language learning, such as doing assignments and finding references recommended by the lecturers. Yet, the up-to-date collection of materials are required to increase knowledge and information. The numbers of provided materials are another issue to be solved to provide the same opportunities for students to learn the language. As a central place of knowledge, libraries must have fulfilled the students' needs (Navghare et al., 2018). Moreover, language labs develop and improve students' language skills in learning a foreign language (Al-Jafr, 2021); (Al-otaibi, 2023). In this case, the students also use language lab especially for listening course. In fact, the students need self-access facilities that can support other subjects. Therefore, they can engage with a variety of learning materials demand that suit them (Giri, 2011). It shows that the LRCs provide them opportunities to practice language skills and elements.

Furthermore, the activities and service of the LRC promote the language development. Certainly, it must be in line with the LRC mission (Sulaiman, 2011). The activity such book review should be conducted sustainably to enrich students' knowledge. The lack of story-telling and public speaking corner influence the students' learning experience. As stated by Wannapiroon et al. (2021), the management of physical learning resources must include event-based learning resources, such as coaching, study visit, seminar, academic conference, etc.

In addition, digitalization of LRC can facilitate students' independent learning. As stated by (Sulaiman, 2011) that technology skill is one of the reflection of 21st century skills. Therefore, the availability of digitalization of LRC is required. The library provides internet access so that students acquire knowledge easily (Wannapiroon et al., 2021). The facts that LRCs lack access to EFL website is not accordance with most students' needs, whereas it offers students with an effective (Murray & MacPherson, 2004); interactive, meaningful and motivating online language learning experience (Shafie et al., 2012). In shows that a well-managed LRC assist students in teaching and learning process (Sulaiman, 2011).

To sum up, the reasons such as finding out some references for course assignments, obtaining addition information on certain subject, enriching students' knowledge through book review program, and building independent learning through digitalization show the students' need of LRC to support English language teaching. Therefore, it is important to plan the short and long term physical needs of the learning resource centre. The needs must always be studied and evaluated by the RC administrator from time to time.

CONCLUSIONS

The existence of learning resource center (LRC) is important to facilitate students' independent learning as the new paradigm of education. Students are expected to be able to make maximum use of a resource center to support the English language learning. For that reasons, it is urgent to find out an innovation to restructure the physical needs of learning resource center based on the students' perception. Therefore, internal and external support are required to build effective language facilities management to improve the quality of students' language learning.

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